

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1180

By Hill

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate Frances Juanita Potter Ruetz on the celebration of her eightieth birthday.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause in their deliberations to pay tribute to those citizens who are celebrating special occasions in their estimable lives; and

WHEREAS, Frances Juanita Potter Ruetz will celebrate her 80th birthday on June 7, 2012, a milestone that will be commemorated as yet another precious souvenir of life's rich pageant; and

WHEREAS, the daughter of Minnie and Spencer Potter, Mrs. Ruetz was born on June 7, 1932, in the house where she still resides; and

WHEREAS, her beloved aunt, Mae Potter, taught her to play the piano at the tender age of five, and within a year's time she was composing her own music, performing advanced pieces, and raising the banner of Christ at her local church; and

WHEREAS, the young prodigy was also an assiduous scholar who graduated with honors from Jonesboro High School and earned her bachelor's degree at East Tennessee State University; and

WHEREAS, an outstanding teacher who devoted her career to providing the highest quality education for Tennessee's students, Mrs. Ruetz served with acumen and alacrity as a music teacher in Washington County for thirty years, nurturing as many as 350 students each day, working diligently to organize community support for the high school music program, and raising the necessary funds to purchase music equipment for her students; and

WHEREAS, Francis Ruetz immersed herself in service to her students not simply by teaching them in the classroom but also by escorting them to performances throughout Northeast Tennessee and on tour in Spain; and

WHEREAS, a longtime member of *Who's Who in American Music*, Mrs. Francis Ruetz created and directed the Washington County Singing Republicans in 1966, which received the distinct honor of representing the state of Tennessee as the first amateur group to perform at a national convention; and

WHEREAS, she was also responsible for the formation of the celebrated Centennial Singers, and she directed their performances throughout Northeast Tennessee in 1969-1970 in celebration of Johnson City's centennial; and

WHEREAS, advocating and volunteering for the arts throughout their lives, Francis Ruetz and her husband, Gerhard G. Ruetz, were founding members of the Jonesborough Repertory Theater; and

WHEREAS, her many accomplishments aside, Mrs. Ruetz is most grateful for the love and support she shares with her husband and their two children, Damaris and Jon, both of whom have also excelled in the music industry; Damaris has performed with a wide variety of celebrated musicians, and Jon is the author and composer of *Liberty!*, the official outdoor drama of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, as she enters into her ninth decade, Frances Ruetz possesses a vitality and a zest for life that is extraordinary for a person of any age, arranging monthly concerts for her Monday Club of Johnson City and occasionally performing the sacred music of her youth during Sunday morning worship services; and

WHEREAS, we wish to grasp this golden opportunity to specially recognize one of Tennessee's most outstanding citizens on this very special occasion; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor and congratulate Frances Juanita Potter Ruetz upon the celebration of her 80th birthday and extend to her our best wishes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.